

PIECES OF THE PARAMEDIC PUZZLE

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE

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Abstract

The Richardson Fire Department learned that paramedics were more dissatisfied in general with their jobs than the rest of the department. The job of paramedic has become one that is not as desired as it once was, and the department is having trouble finding volunteers. The amount of time and money spent to certify paramedics was expensive. The department needed to maintain the paramedics that it has and develop a way to get volunteers who want the position instead of forcing people to enter the program.

The purpose of this research project was to identify the problems and decide on a solution to have more job satisfaction in emergency medical services and to have this division more in line with the fire suppression and fire prevention. With communication lines open to the employees of the department and an honest look at our department, we identified the problems and designed a plan to correct the problems.

The action research method was used in this project, and the following research questions were answered in this report.

1. What do the paramedics in the emergency medical services perceive the problems to be?
2. Are the perceived problems and the true problems the same?
3. Do other fire departments have the same problems?
4. How have other fire departments attempted to solve these problems?

5. How successful have their attempts been?

A meeting of the paramedics was held by Chief Shanklin to provide a means for them to air their complaints openly. A literature review was conducted through two libraries to get a background of management theories and to research other ideas about the same problems. A survey was done of fire departments in Texas that serve the same sized population and provide the same emergency medical services that the Richardson Fire Department provides.

The results showed that the perceived problems of our department, the problems of the departments in the literature review, and the items returned on the surveys were all similar. The results led to the conclusion that the perceived problems are real. The literature review of the management theories reinforced the survey results by showing where motivation factors have not been addressed.

The recommendations of this paper are to make sure the pay is commensurate with the job performed. The department needs more paramedics to set up a rotation to allow them time to participate on the fire suppression side of the department and spread the paramedic work equally. More opportunities for promotion on the ambulance can be solved by having officers on the ambulance. The implementation of a career ladder to give more opportunities for vertical or lateral moves to and from the three areas of medical services, fire suppression, and fire prevention is also needed.. The last item is a department attitude that supports the personal growth of all employees and validates their job.

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Introduction

The Richardson Fire Department has noted that paramedics are more dissatisfied in general with their jobs than the rest of the department. The paramedic position has become less desirable in the last few years and the department is having trouble finding volunteers to enter the program. Paramedic training is very expensive and time consuming. The department must maintain the paramedics that it has, and history shows that the best paramedic is one that volunteers to serve, not one that is forced to serve.

The purpose of this research project is to identify the problems and decide on a solution to bring job satisfaction of the emergency medical services up to a level with fire suppression and fire prevention. With communication lines to the employees of the department being opened and an honest look at our present department, we should be able to identify the problems and design a plan to correct these problems.

The action research method was used in this project, and the following research questions are answered in this report.

1. What do the paramedics in the emergency medical services perceive the problems to be?
2. Are the perceived problems and the true base problems the same?
3. Do other fire departments have the same problems?
4. How have other fire departments attempted to solve these problems?
5. How successful have their attempts been?

Background and Significance

Fire departments across the country have evolved slowly until the arrival of emergency medical services (EMS). The entrance of the emergency medical services into the fire department as an ambulance service with paramedics has only been recent compared to the age of the fire service. The ambulance service was started as an extra service to the public, but over the last several years the emergency medical service has become the major focus of the fire department. Our department makes more medical runs (70%) than fire related runs (30%). The department has not kept abreast of the required needs of paramedics.

In 1997 Chief Shanklin was hired by the city. Chief Shanklin opened the lines of communications and noticed many complaints in the paramedic ranks. He held a meeting with the paramedics and they were encouraged to openly discuss any problems or perceived problems. Among the concerns the paramedics listed were pay in respect to the responsibility that they have, few chances to promote, lack of respect for the paramedic job, efficiency forms that do not relate to the paramedic job, fairness of assigning people to paramedic school, and lack of appreciation of their job requirements by untrained firefighters just to name a few.

The justification of this research project comes from the manual of the Strategic Management of Change course given by the National Fire Academy (1997). Unit 1 introduces the manual and the first paragraph under the heading “Current Issues and Trends”, (p. 1-4) states “There is a continuing stream of changes occurring in the fire and emergency services as a result of new trends and

it is mandating that leaders in the field ‘stand ready’ ”. The background of our department and the identification of problems shows that the department has not satisfied the needs of its employees and needs to correct these problems and plan for the future.

Literature Review

Employee Motivation

The supervisor continuously tries to keep the employees motivated in their jobs. Many times the employees with the most skills are outperformed by the ones with fewer skills. The ones with fewer skills are motivated and work harder. This problem shows the different needs of each employee. Each employee has different needs. (Attner, 1983).

Studies show that motivation is based on need. “This need could range from basic life sustaining need to a higher need such as a social or self-esteem need. This need creates a tension or stimulus that results in a want. Because of the want, the person develops a set of behaviors to satisfy this need. This creates an action to achieve the goal that was set by the want.” (Attner, 1983, p. 283)

The needs and wants mentioned above has led to a motivational model that becomes an integrated model when several behavioral factors are considered. Three of these factors are a person’s past experiences, environmental influences, and perceptions. Skills of the person are added to this model as well as incentives

that are created by management. All of these factors lead to a definition of motivation--“the interaction of a person’s internalized needs and external influences which determines behavior designed to achieve a goal”(Attner, 1983, p. 286).

Motivational Theories

Attner’s study of motivational theory begins with Maslow’s theory. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs states that only an unsatisfied need can influence behavior and a satisfied need is not a motivator. These individual needs are arranged in order of priority from basic to complex. A person advances up the levels as the needs are met. And once a need is satisfied it must continue to be satisfied or it becomes a priority again. Maslow’s hierarchy has five levels. The lowest level is physical need, the need for food, clothing, shelter, etc.. Once a person has satisfied the physical need, he or she will try to satisfy the second level of avoidance of risk, harm and pain which is the safety need. The third level is social. Examples of social satisfaction are acceptance, companionship, and love. The fourth level is esteem, in which a person seeks responsibility, self-respect, recognition, and a sense of accomplishment. The fifth level is self-realization, in which a person reaches his or her potential, independence, creativity, and self-expression and maximizes his or her skills and abilities.

Maslow’s theory applies to management in four ways.

“First, its categorization applies to all environments and not specifically to work. Second, each unsatisfied need can lead to a variety of behaviors,

actions, and goals. It is dangerous to attempt to read motives by simply observing a person's actions or behavior. Third, a thwarted need can cause frustration for an employee and will be a force in an employee until it is satisfied. Fourth, the level of satisfaction of needs always fluctuates. Needs never remain fully satisfied.”(Attner, 1983, pp. 288-289)

David McClelland categorized his motivational theory as a need achievement theory. McClelland determined that the three needs to keep a person motivated are achievement, power, and affiliation. “Achievement is the desire to excel or achieve in relation to a set of standards. Power is the desire to control others or have influence over others. Affiliation is the desire for friendship, cooperation, and close interpersonal relationships.” (Attner, 1983, pp. 292-293)

The strong need for achievement is related to how well individuals are motivated to perform a task.

McClelland lists four of the high achievers characteristics. “First is the compelling need for personal achievement. They want to do something more efficiently than before. Second, they take personal responsibility for solving their problems and do not leave the outcome up to others. Third, they set moderate goals to show improvement but not discouraging ones. Fourth, they prefer immediate and concrete feedback.”(Attner, 1983, pp. 293-294)

Finally Frederick Herzberg's theory which he calls the two-factor or hygiene-motivation theory was developed specifically for the work place. One part

of the theory deals with hygiene factors, that is, things that cause job dissatisfaction. The other part deals with motivation factors, the things that cause job satisfaction.

“The hygiene factors are the primary cause of unhappiness on the job.

They are extrinsic to the job, that is, they do not relate directly to a person’s work, to its real nature. When not provided in sufficient quality they result in dissatisfaction but in sufficient quality do not act necessarily as a motivator. They would only lead to no job dissatisfaction. The following is a list of hygiene factors:

1. Salary (fringe benefits)
2. Job security (grievance procedures, seniority privileges)
3. Working conditions
4. Status (privileges, job titles, rank, position)
5. Company policies (fairness in administering policies)
6. Quality of technical supervision (getting answers to job related questions)
7. Quality of interpersonal relations among peers, supervision, and subordinates (social opportunities and development of comfortable operation relationships)

Herzberg put motivation or growth factors on the other side of the line as the primary causes of job satisfaction. They are intrinsic to the job because they relate directly to job content. When these are

provided in sufficient quantity, they provide and affect job satisfaction and high performance. Listed below are six motivation factors:

1. Achievement (opportunity for accomplishment, to contribute something of value)
2. Recognition (acknowledge that contributions were made and appreciated)
3. Responsibility (acquisitions of new duties)
4. Advancement (opportunity to improve one's organizational position as result of job performance)
5. The work itself (self expression, personal satisfaction, and challenge)
6. Possibility of growth (increase knowledge and development through job experience)" (Attner, 1983, pp. 289-291).

Rogers and Levey (1987) also brought many of these same points out in their writings. Promotions and even new titles with the same job requirements can motivate employees. They even considered other benefits, such as a company car or a private office, to add to the factors that motivate. They also state that money alone does not ensure a constant high level of performance. Money can help, but usually other items come into the picture. A fixed salary does not motivate an employee for very long. Pay raises should be used as motivation factor. However, across the board raises do not motivate anyone.

Three other motivation theories relate to the trigger for motivation: the expectancy, reinforcement, and equity theories. The expectancy theory deals with

the effort required for performance, whether or not the performance will have a desired outcome, and how valuable the outcome will be to the employee. The reinforcement theory states that in a given situation, behavior is determined by the rewards or penalties that a person experienced in a similar situation. The equity theory is based on an assumption that people are motivated by a desire to be treated equally at work and are influenced in their behavior choices by the relative rewards they receive. People expect fair compensation for their actions.(Attner, 1983)

Attner also discusses two concepts that influence the opportunity for motivation. The job itself is the first of these. Enlarging the job, rotating the people through positions, and enriching the job will give the person the opportunity to get motivated. A supportive climate which would include such things as removing barriers, encouraging positive risk taking, showing employees that their work is appreciated, and providing stability, also provides opportunity.

The company should provide a friendly atmosphere and should respect employees as valuable assets and not as an expense. This attitude is set by top management. Top management should help the employee build self-esteem, self-respect, and self-confidence. “The leadership of a company must realize that the difference between superb performance and a mediocre one often isn’t the ‘deal’ cut with the employee, it’s the treatment they dish out. Does management express its appreciation or withhold it? This either adds to the deal or cheapens it.”

(Rogers and Levey, 1987, p. 151) Part of employee appreciation is the company's responsibility to make every effort to weed out the unproductive employees. Unproductive employees are costly to the company and the productive employees gain satisfaction by knowing that when they do quality work, they are wanted as part of the organization. They get real motivation from knowing that their performances protect their futures.(Rogers and Levey, 1987)

“When the employee does a good job, they should be recognized for their work. When someone gives extra;

1. Get out of your office—go pay them a personal visit.
2. Don't keep good works a secret—make sure management knows of their effort.
3. Thank them publicly—do this at meetings, etc.”(Rogers and Levey, 1987, pp. 166-168)

Views From the EMS Profession

The emergency medical profession has published many articles about the problems of recruiting and keeping trained people. D. Trace Skeen (1991) published an article about how to keep trained employees in the system by keeping them feeling happy and useful. The employer must be innovative in his or her approach. Skeen says that the employer needs to research what the employees are looking for before developing a plan. Some of the problem areas that Skeen has found to be problem areas are recognition of the job, self-esteem, pride in the job,

work load, and equipment furnished to do the job with. Some negative factors in the job are few benefits, fear of infection, and stressful working conditions. Skeen points to the fact that many organizations have tried to solve the problem with money which is only a temporary fix. The subject of a career program was introduced as a method to help the employee find his or her place in the industry and grow as much as they needed to for their personal satisfaction. The right program would help keep the long-term employee while holding down the burn-out rate. Skeen states that few organizations have tried the career ladder as a solution.

John M. Norris (1992) approaches the motivation of the emergency medical worker using Herzberg as his basis. The worker must be motivated to perform well. Some of the motivations that Norris discussed in detail are open communications and job enrichment. Managers must spend time communicating with the employees to find their concerns, and the employees need to know that their concerns are being acted upon. The employee needs feedback, negative and positive, on his or her performance. When the employee does something good, the need to be recognized for it in front of his or her peers is important for their good performance. Norris makes the point that job enrichment motivates the employee but that managers need to recognize the fact that job enrichment is not a one-time effort, it is a never ending job. Managers should always be concerned about how to improve pay, benefits, working conditions, and anything else that will benefit the

employee and assist him or her in doing a better job. Norris also points out that all employees are different and no one solution will satisfy all people.

The U. S. Fire Administration's Office of Planning and Education did a study to determine what causes the high attrition rate in the emergency medical services (1991). When the literature review was done to prepare for the study, some items were listed by EMS employees as problems. These were role conflict, ambiguity, low pay, work loads, excessive exposure to death, and the lack of a career ladder. The report states that the items the literature review revealed closely paralleled what was reported by fire department personnel included in the study. The study showed that 87% of the people surveyed felt that the lack of a career ladder was part of the attrition problem.

An article by Gordon M. Sachs (1990) of the U.S. Fire Administration Office relates how the EMS program started out as a stepchild of the fire service but has now evolved to 60-80% of departments' activity. Sachs refers to career ladders in departments and how promotion and advancement should occur from EMS ranks as well as they do other areas. The theme of Sachs's article is that fire departments today will have to realize that EMS is a major part of their job if they are to motivate and retain experienced and quality employees.

Summary

Several articles and surveys indicate that fire departments across the country are experiencing problems keeping their employees in the emergency medical field motivated and satisfied. These problems seem to range from pay,

promotions and hours worked to respect for the job that they perform. These problems are not specific to fire departments. Maslow details his hierarchy of needs, but Herzberg seems to give a better theory, one that is related directly to the work place. Herzberg's theory gives two sets of factors, motivational and hygiene. The literature review reinforces the idea that the employee needs to be considered an important part of the total department plan. The employer must provide for hygiene factors to make sure the employee is not dissatisfied and then must provide for motivational factors to ensure high performance.

Procedures

The problem was first identified in our department by Chief Shanklin during meetings held with employees that were now serving or had served in the EMS division. The lines of communication were opened. There were many complaints regarding respect, staffing, and being locked into one position with little chance of promotion. The literature review of publications from trade magazines and management text was conducted at the Learning Resource Center located at the National Fire Academy, Emmitsburg, Maryland. The city library in Richardson, Texas, was also used for management text.

A survey was conducted to find if other departments were having similar problems and if so what their solutions were. The departments that would confirm the same problems needed to be asked if they solved the problems adequately and,

if so, how. Twenty-five surveys were sent out to Texas fire departments that were similar in size, served the same basic population, and provided the same basic services as our department. Twenty-two of the surveys were returned. A copy of the survey form is located in Appendix A.

The surveys had some limitations. One of our concerns is to get employees to volunteer for the paramedic program. The survey asked a question about volunteers. Many departments have mandatory participation in their paramedic program so this question was not applicable to them. Another limitation was the question of pay for the employees. The Richardson Fire Department is located in the Metroplex area, Dallas, Fort Worth, and all suburbs. The pay here is higher, because of competition from cities, than in a more isolated city of the same size.

Because the pay in isolated cities is much lower, pay is more of an issue to isolated departments..

Results

The first question raised in this paper's introduction is "What do the paramedics perceive the problems to be?". This question was answered by the interview that our chief had with the paramedics. Their complaints numbered 14 and included lack of volunteers, lack of respect, lack of time on engine company, dispatching, increased responsibility, lack of career ladder, supplies and equipment,

staffing, liability coverage, stress, and supervisors uninformed on EMS procedures.

Many of these problems could be grouped in broader categories.

The second question relates to determining the true problems in the EMS field. The literature review as well as surveys done by other agencies listed many areas that departments across the country were having problems with. Our department interviews and the information published in the references used in this project corresponded in many areas.

The third question relates to whether or not other departments have the same problems. Question #6 from my survey asks for a ranking of problems. The results are listed below in the matrix. Many departments did not rank all of the problems, only the top few.

Areas of concern	Rank from (1-8) in order of importance.							
	No. of items answered							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Respect	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Pay	5	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Support for staff	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Few promotional opportunities	1	3	1	0	0	0	1	0
Division between EMS & Suppression	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
Equipment	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Supplies	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Other	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 1

The main problems in EMS divisions are pay, few promotional opportunities, and lack of respect. All of the other categories fall closely behind

except for “other”. These were too many Standard Of Procedures to follow, too much time spent on the ambulance, and the policy that all paramedics must not let their certification expire.

Question #4 asks how other departments have attempted to solve the problems. The chart below shows the methods tried.

Methods to solve problem	Number of departments that have tried the method
Additional pay	7
Rank on the ambulance	1
Rotation to suppression	6
Career ladder	3
Reduced hours	0
Other	4

Table 2

More departments try “additional pay” than any other solution. Rotating the employees between the ambulance and the engine companies is the second most popular. Some have tried a career ladder, and “other” solutions were punitive methods, more meetings with the employees, and implementing a policy that makes being a paramedic mandatory for promotion.

The last question asked how successful the solutions have been.

Two said that the solution was permanent while seven said it was partial. Two checked the category of temporary solution and one said that nothing was solved. The two departments that had permanent results used additional pay along with rotating between ambulance and engine companies as well as having many paramedics so the work load is more even.

Our department is making the decision to implement a career ladder to open more promotion possibilities to the EMS division. It was felt that this was the best method for our situation. All new employees are now required to become a paramedic to have more paramedics to spread this work more evenly. When openings occur in divisions other than the paramedic division a person that is qualified may promote or take a lateral transfer. These choices, give each person flexibility in his or her career path. People can experience the medical, suppression, or fire prevention areas and gain a broad base of knowledge if he or she chooses. A copy of the career ladder can be found in Appendix B of this report. This career ladder has not yet been implemented because it awaits approval from city management.

Discussion

The review of publications from trade magazines described the areas of concerns from departments across the country. The survey of the 25 departments showed that approximately 50% of the departments do feel that they have more personnel problems in the emergency medical area than they do in suppression, prevention, or administration. In Table One, the departments that do feel that they have problems list pay as the top problem. The next two items follow the first problem very close in the number of responses. Few promotional opportunities and the lack of respect for the job that paramedics do, are also major problems. These results

correspond closely to the results of the survey done by the U. S. Fire Administration's Office of Planning and Education which showed low pay, work loads, ambiguity, the lack of a career ladder, and role conflict as major problems for emergency medical workers. Many of these are the same problems that were highlighted in Chief's Shanklin interview with our own paramedics while determining the problems faced by our department.

The results of the survey and the interview of the City of Richardson emergency medical personnel do present problems to the managers of fire departments. The fire service has not given the attention to the EMS side of the department. Many of the departments surveyed have tried different things to correct the issues, from additional pay to rotation to fire suppression to creating a career ladder for more promotional opportunities. However, only two departments said that their results were permanent. The rest of the surveyed departments were split evenly between nothing solved, partial solutions, and temporary solutions. The two departments with the permanent results used a combination of additional pay, rotating of the ambulance to fire suppression, and requiring more paramedics to even out the work load. These efforts to correct the problem do address many of the items listed by my survey, the literature review, and our department's paramedics. However, Herzberg, Maslow, and McClelland address many factors that departments seem to overlook. Some solutions are as simple as giving personnel recognition for the work that they perform, providing a friendly atmosphere or environment, granting a new title to the same job that reflects the expertise of the job, and allowing the opportunity to achieve

and contribute something to the job. The possibility of growth in the job or increased knowledge through job experience are ways to keep the personnel interested and motivated. The leadership of the department must set the tone for this atmosphere and take the lead in providing interest and motivation for the employee.

From an organizational point of view, the fire department must consider where it has been, where it is today, and where it needs to be in the future. The typical fire department several years ago simply put out fires. Departments have changed greatly over the years. A quick check of our runs shows that emergency medical calls are the majority of our business. The department should provide to the public the desired service. Since medical calls are a majority of our calls then the department should start giving the respect to the area of our department that is carrying the load. The department does not need to put paramedics above others, but it should at least give them equal opportunities for pay, promotion, respect, and self-satisfaction. In Maslow's thinking, it is the higher level of needs and in Herzberg's thinking, it is the things that motivate as well as the things that keep us from being dissatisfied.

Recommendations

When the data for the survey, the problems stated by the paramedics from our own department, and the information from the literature review are considered, the problem of job satisfaction is not a simple one. More than one solution must be implemented to correct such a complicated problem. The pay for the job performed and the education level to be maintained should be considered and reviewed regularly. The paramedics are in a stressful occupation and make quick, tough decisions daily. They are constantly exposed to death, major trauma, and contagious diseases. This exposure cannot be taken lightly.

Our department must change the policy of having only a few paramedics that serve on the ambulances all of the time. Changes are already being made in this direction to certify more paramedics so that a rotation of some type can be implemented to give them some relief and let them work in fire suppression, which drew many paramedics to the fire department in the first place. Sometimes rotation prevents paramedic “burn-out” but mainly it is necessary to prevent an attitude of division between the paramedics and the fire suppression workers. We have a department of 126 shift personnel, 36 of which were assigned to the ambulance making the majority of the runs for the entire department. This person-to-job ratio needs to be balanced better over the department.

Our fire department at this time does not have any type of rank or officers on the ambulance. This lack of rank leads to a dead-end job situation. Any promotion

must be made to the fire suppression side, so the person that enjoys the medical service is at a disadvantage. Another disadvantage is that the number of promotions to fire suppression are few compared to the number of people eligible for the job. The paramedics would have to be promoted to the driver/engineer rank. Some feel that this promotion does not offer the person the chance to make as many major decisions as the paramedic does day in and day out.

A career ladder should be developed. This ladder will let a new employee map out his/her career from the start. The ladder should allow for vertical and lateral moves between fire suppression, emergency medical services, and fire prevention. This movement will have many benefits, including the possibility of a broad base of education in the three fields for the person that wants to move as high up the ranks as possible. This education would give a person many routes to the top and more knowledge when dealing with the public's concerns. The Richardson Fire Department has developed a career ladder. I chaired a committee made of a cross section of the department, which was assigned to develop the career ladder. A copy of this ladder is in the Appendix B of this paper.

The last item to cover is the attitude and atmosphere of the entire department. Attitude must be initiated by the top staff. The personnel must know that they are important to the organization. The staff must validate the job that the personnel do by recognizing the good jobs done. Good workers should be praised in public, not behind closed doors. The rest of the validation process involves the staff dealing with, not ignoring, the people who do not perform up to expectations. One of the most important

things that can be done to promote a better attitude is to open communications. All aspects of attitude improvement in the department have to be started and maintained from top management.

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Appendix A

Survey For Personnel Problems

1. What percentage of your emergency runs is in the EMS category?

A. 0-25%	C. 51-75%
B. 26-50%	D. 76-100%

2. Do you feel that your department has several problems in keeping personnel satisfied?

YES	NO
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3. If yes to #2, does one area seem to have more problems than any other?

A. Fire Suppression	
B. Emergency Medical	
C. Fire Prevention	
D. Administration	
E. Other	_____

4. Does your department employ paramedics?

YES	NO
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5. If the answer to #3 is emergency medical, what is thought to be the main complaint by the paramedics?
 (Rank in order of importance with 1 being the most important.)

_____	A. Respect
_____	B. Pay
_____	C. Support for staff
_____	D. Few promotional opportunities
_____	E. Division between EMS & suppression
_____	F. Equipment
_____	G. Supplies
_____	H. Other_____

6. Have you implemented any methods to solve the problems?

YES

NO

7. If yes to #6, what method have you tried to solve the problem?

- A. Additional pay
- B. Rank on the ambulance
- C. Rotation between ambulance and suppression
- D. Career ladder
- E. Reduced hours
- F. Other_____

8. What success has your department had with its solutions?

- A. Permanent (Problem solved)
- B. Partial (Only solved part of problem permanently)
- C. Temporary (Solution only lasted 1-3 years)
- D. None (Nothing solved)

9. Does your department have difficulty getting volunteers for paramedic school?

YES

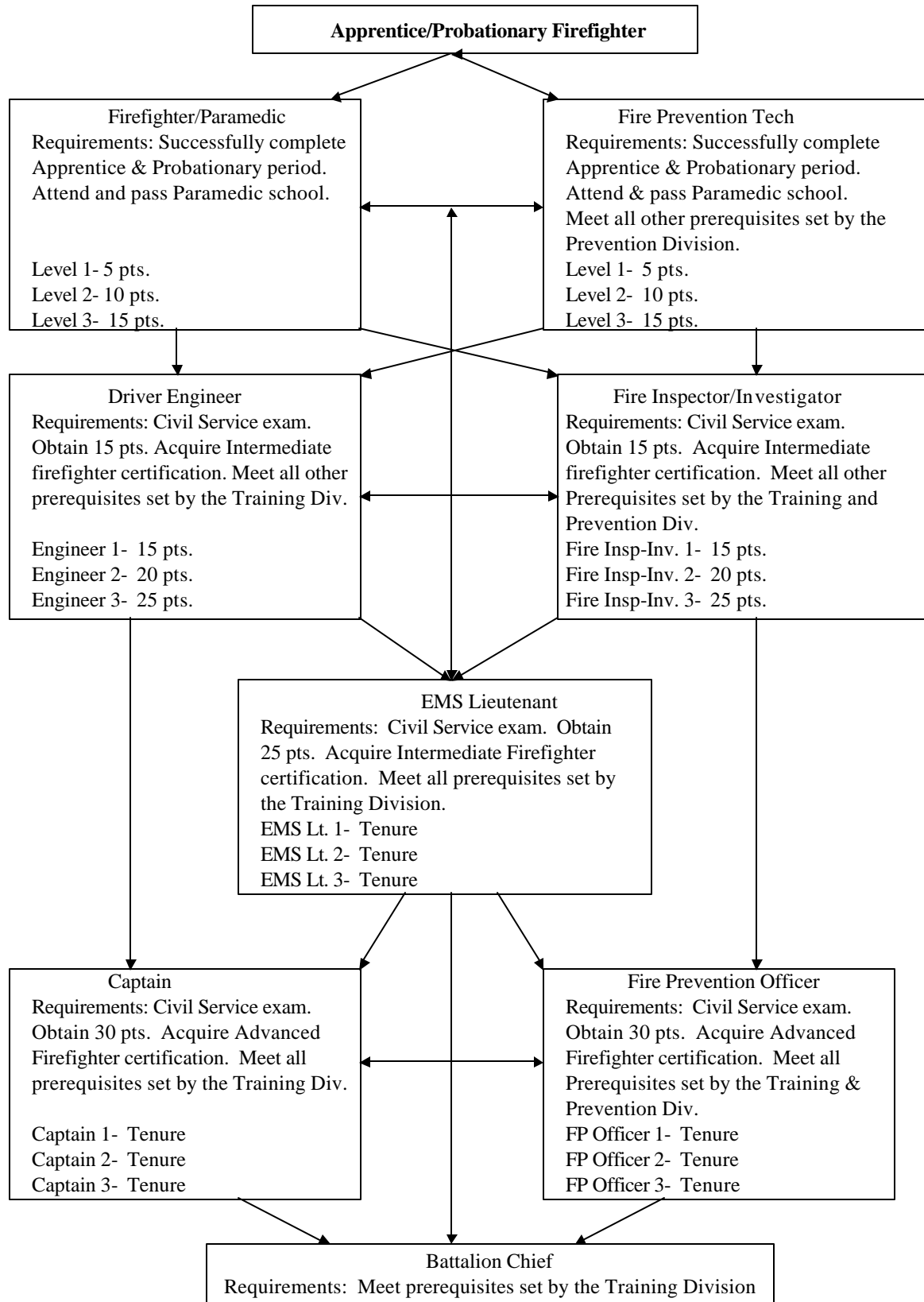
NO

10. Does your department have a method to prevent any one position from becoming dead-end?

YES

NO

Appendix B



Richardson Fire Department Point System

Any class that is fire department related in which a certificate is received would count in the following manner:

20 classroom hours = 1 semester hour

1 semester hour = $\frac{1}{4}$ point

Any class offered that goes over twenty hours but does not go to forty hours will carry over to the next class taken by the Firefighter. Example:

Hose rolling = 32 classroom hours

20 hours = 1 semester hour or $\frac{1}{4}$ point

$32 - 20 = 12$ hours

12 hours will be carried on the books until the next class taken

Cooking for the Fire service = 8 hours

$8 + 12$ (carry over from hose rolling) = 20 hours

20 hours = 1 semester hour or $\frac{1}{4}$ point

Benchmarks:

Associates Degree

60 hours divided by 4 = 15 points

plus $\frac{1}{3}$ if Fire Department related

$15 + 5 = 20$ points

BS Degree

120 hours divided by 4 = 30 points

plus $\frac{1}{3}$ if Fire Department related

$30 + 10 = 40$ points

Non-degree hours will not exceed 50% of hours required
for the degree that the Firefighter is working towards

EMS:**Paramedic**

760 hours = 10 points

with 2 points added for each successful Bi-annual / state exam.

If a paramedic decides to drop his certification before 10 years
he will drop back to only 3 points earned for the actual classroom
part of paramedic school

FMO:**Peace Officer**

560 hours = 7 points

Arson Investigator

122 hours = 3 points

Inspector

176 hours = 3 points

Firefighter Certification:**Intermediate Firefighter**

1 point

Advanced Firefighter

1 point

Advanced Firefighter

1 point

Etc.

Tenure:

1 point for each year of service.